

**OPINION 2068 (Case 3210)*****Catocala alabamiae* Grote, 1875 (Insecta, Lepidoptera): specific name conserved**

**Abstract.** The Commission has ruled that the specific name of *Catocala alabamiae* Grote, 1875 for a species of a small, yellow-hindwinged moth from North America (family NOCTUIDAE) is conserved by the suppression of the senior synonym *C. polygama* Guenée, 1852.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; Lepidoptera; NOCTUIDAE; *Catocala*; *Catocala alabamiae*; *Catocala polygama*; moths; North America.

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**Ruling**

- (1) Under the plenary power the name *polygama* Guenée, 1852, as published in the binomen *Catocala polygama*, is hereby suppressed for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy.
- (2) The name *alabamiae* Grote, 1875, as originally published in the binomen *Catocala alabamiae*, is hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.
- (3) The name *polygama* Guenée, 1852, as published in the binomen *Catocala polygama* and as suppressed in (1) above, is hereby placed on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology.

**History of Case 3210**

An application to conserve the specific name of *Catocala alabamiae* Grote, 1875, for a species of a small, yellow-hindwinged moth from North America (family NOCTUIDAE), by the suppression of *C. polygama* Guenée, 1852, was received from Lawrence F. Gall (*Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.A.*) on 18 June 2001. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 59: 117–120 (June 2002). The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. No comments on this case were received.

**Decision of the Commission**

On 1 September 2003 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN 59: 119. At the close of the voting period on 1 December 2003 the votes were as follows: 18 Commissioners voted FOR the proposals, 4 Commissioners (Bouchet, Kerzhner, Minelli and Ng) voted AGAINST, no vote was received from Eschmeyer. Böhme and Patterson were on leave of absence.

Voting for the proposals, Calder commented that assigning precedence to the name *C. alabamiae* over *C. polygama* when the two are considered synonyms rather than suppressing the latter name would have been preferable.

Voting against, Bouchet commented that the limited number of references cited in the application does not demonstrate sufficient usage of the name *C. alabamiae* to justify setting aside the Principle of Priority by use of the plenary power. Also voting

against, Ng commented the problem could have been resolved by the careful selection of a neotype for *Catocala polygama* that would keep the name as a junior synonym. Similarly, if there was a problem with the identity of *C. alabamae* because the extant type is a female, a proposal could have been made to the Commission to replace the female with a male specimen that would conserve the name as it is used.

### Original references

The following are the original references to the names placed on an Official List and an Official Index by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

*alabamae*, *Catocala*, Grote, 1875, *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia*, 27: 427.

*polygama*, *Catocala*, Guenée, 1852, *Histoire naturelle des insectes. Species général des lepidoptères*, vol. 7 (Noctuelites, vol. 3), p. 105.